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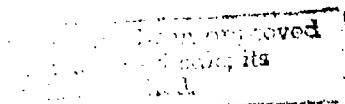
**COPING WITH SEPARATION: AN ANALYSIS OF OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIES  
USED BY WORKING AND NONWORKING WIVES  
DURING ROUTINE DEPLOYMENT**

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### General Conclusions

1. Working and nonworking wives do not differ statistically at Phase 3 (2 months into the deployment) on any of the measures of stress or satisfaction.
2. Nonworking wives change less with respect to measured dysphoria and overall satisfaction with Navy life between Phase 1 (two months prior to deployment) and Phase 3.
3. Measures of stress and satisfaction vary with respect to the amount of change between pre- and during deployment assessments. Some, such as dysphoria and overall satisfaction with Navy life appear more "reactive" to the changes imposed by the separation and deployment process. The standard measure of depression (CESD scale) and the measure of symptomatic health were more stable between phases.
4. Both working and nonworking wives, on the average, evaluate the five coping strategies of the Family Coping Inventory to be only "moderately helpful".
5. In general, nonworking wives evaluate the Family Coping Inventory strategies to be more "helpful" in coping with separation than working wives.
6. For both groups, the Managing Psychological Tension and Strain approach to coping with separation is correlated with greater changes in dysphoria from Phase 1 to Phase 3. This particular coping strategy includes either avoidant, negative appraisal and past focused behaviors. The correlation means that those women who assess this approach to be more "helpful" become more dysphoric as the deployment cycle progresses.
7. In general, for both working and nonworking wives, there was a sparse relationship between their assessments of the helpfulness of the five FCI coping strategies and the six measures of stress and satisfaction.
8. Those nonworking wives who assess their efforts to maintain their family's integrity as being helpful tend to be less dysphoric at the transition to deployment.
9. Working wives revealed even fewer significant relationships between the variables. This finding, in combination with the fact that working wives generally devalued the FCI coping strategies suggests that they utilize unique behaviors or resources to cope with separation strains.
10. Working wives who value efforts to develop interpersonal relationships and social support indicated that they were significantly less satisfied with overall Navy life.

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## Introduction

As evidenced by recent significant Department of Defense and Congressional action, the employment of spouses in paid and volunteer employment outside the home has emerged as a primary concern in the military. Apparently, this increased emphasis is due to a concern for the economic status of military families as well as concern for emotional well-being for dependent spouses. (Manning & DeRouin, 1981; Rothlieder, 1987).

Both prior to and parallel with this effort to employ wives there has been a series of intensified efforts to understand and mitigate against the negative effects of regular peace time separations of families due to routine deployment (Archer and Cauthorne, 1986; Hunter, 1982; Nice, 1981). Prompted by studies revealing an intimate link between family concerns (wife's attitude in particular) and active duty husband's satisfaction, retention intention, and readiness, coupled with the clinical observations of dysfunctional families, the Navy has responded to meet the changing needs of families by the installation of Family Service Centers (FSC) worldwide. Much progress appears to have been made in the past eight years with respect to the FSCs' ability to assist families in attempting to resolve problems associated with separation. Nevertheless, counselors, program directors and policy makers alike have expressed the need for more detailed information about the deployment experience and the elements of successful adaptation to the predictable stresses and strains.

The present study lies at the junction between these concerns about the role of paid work outside the home among non-active duty spouses (wives) and the continuing effort to understand which coping strategies are most effective in dealing with the vicissitudes of the deployment separation. In this study, the use of the terms "working" and "nonworking" is mainly a matter of convenience. In actuality, the real distinction is between those women who work outside the home in paid employment and those whose principal occupation is as homemaker.

Historically, the major focus of research related to military family separations has been upon the possible deleterious effects of the additional psychological and social role strains experienced by the waiting wives (Hunter, 1982). Despite prior knowledge of the impending separation from their spouses, as in the case of regularized deployments, the changes which ensue have been repeatedly linked to increased emotional distress such as depression, physical health problems, anger, grief, guilt, sexual frustration, and heightened anxiety. (Bey & Lange, 1974; Boynton & Pearce, 1978; Decker, 1978; den Dulk, 1980; Lendry, 1976; Lumaden, 1978; Nice, 1981; Peck & Schroeder, 1976; Snyder, 1978c). Other studies have shown negative impacts upon the marital and other family relationships both as a function of the separation and of stress associated with the homecoming (Hunter & Hickman, 1981; Oldaker, 1969; Orthner, 1980a). While the somewhat excessive focus upon the negative outcomes of separations may have been appropriate in the early stages of research, several investigators have more recently shown the story to be more complex. An array of mediating factors such as age, time in the service, good pre-separation marital adjustment, positive attitude towards service, the use of social resources, and personality variables and coping efforts have been studied (Archer and Cauthorne, 1986; Carlson, 1981; Hunter & Hickman, 1981). These authors have suggested that for some wives, the separation may be a positive experience and the difficulties of separation may only serve as grist for the mill of personal growth and family development.

Despite the awareness that many wives do cope well with the changes inherent in the separation from the spouse, the specific constellation of behaviors, cognitions and social supports which they employ to cope with the changes has only recently come under investigation (Decker, 1978; McCubbin et al, 1980). Information about those individuals and families who cope effectively is clearly needed.

## Conceptual and Methodological Issues of Concern

### Coping Strategies

The diagram in Figure 1 is a suggestive multidimensional representation of issues and variable relationships which need to be investigated over the long haul with respect to the question of which coping strategies or elements (1) are effective for which sub-population of people (2) with respect to which area of concern (strains) (3) as measured by changes in which stresses or outcomes (4). By no means are these exhaustive lists. Nevertheless, they represent many of the already suggested topics of interest in the study of coping efforts (Boynton & Pearce, 1978; Carlson, 1981; DeLongis et al., 1982; Lazarus, 1974; McCubbin and Patterson, 1987; Menaghan, 1982).

Evaluating the relationships between the elements of the cube suggests conceptual and measurement issues with respect to assessing the effect of coping efforts on stress which need to be addressed (Menaghan, 1982). Pertinent for the present study are the following considerations:

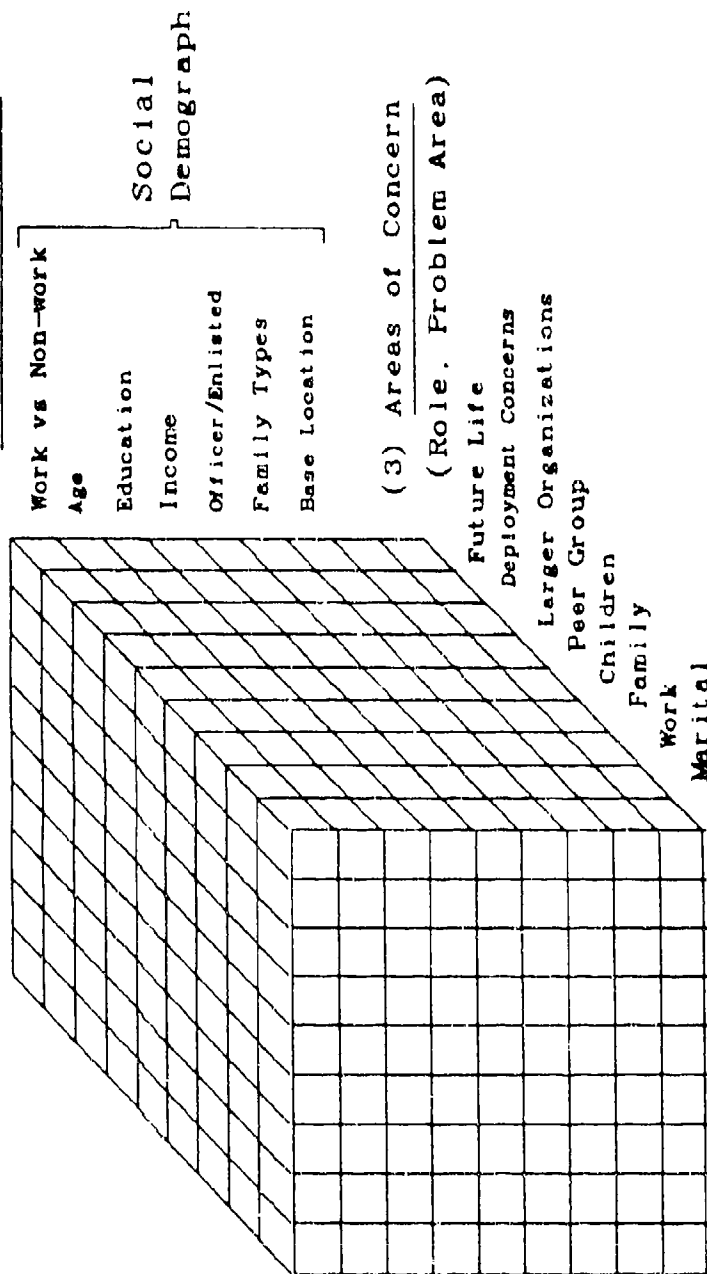
1. The general notion that "coping" has been conceptualized from a variety of theoretical perspectives of which the of the present study is but one;
2. Studies of military and civilian populations alike have shown that the statistical impact of a particular coping effort is to some extent dependent upon the measure of stress or outcome which is used;
3. Studying the relationship between stress and coping from a crosssectional perspective is limited and may yield different results when compared to studies which investigate actual change in either the perceived stress or area of antagonistic concern over time;
4. Characteristics of the person may impact upon which coping strategies they utilize, independent of the particular strain or social situation;
5. Still, conceptually intermingled with the notion expressed in #4 above is the idea that particular coping efforts chosen and effective may to some extent be related to the situational context.



Figure 1

# Dimensions of Stress and Coping

## (2) Subpopulation Membership and Social Context



## (4) Stress Measures

Dysphoria  
Depression  
Boredom  
Loneliness  
Dissatisfaction  
w/ Navy  
Marital Dysfunction  
Health  
Drug & Alcohol Abuse  
Child Abuse

McCubbin Scales  
Carlson Scales  
Hassles & Uplifts  
Warden & Sobel  
Hann Topology  
Lazarus Types  
Family Resources  
Individual Resources  
Community Resources

## Specific Styles Coping of Behaviors Coping

## (1) Coping Conceptualizations

The choice of coping measures utilized in a given research design will no doubt be related to the theoretical bias of the researcher as well as the kinds of questions posed (Menaghan, 1982). As Menaghan has concisely described, there are at least three general approaches to conceptualizing "coping," including, coping resources (generalized skills and attitudes that are thought to be useful when struggling with strains), styles of coping (typical or habitual ways of approaching problems) and specific coping efforts (behavioral or intra-psychic action taken in situations that are aimed at reducing stress) (Menaghan, 1982).

Within the domain of specific coping behaviors which is center stage in this report, several investigators have developed different measures of coping behavior. Among civilian populations, Pearlin and Schooler (1978) chose behaviors which, in initial pilot interviews were described as useful by individuals facing particular strains (those aspects of situation such as marital fighting) within specific social contexts: parent/child relationships, marital and occupational.

Among military families, several approaches have been employed to access these behavioral aspects of coping (Boynton & Pearce, 1977; Carlson, 1976; McCubbin et al., 1980). Use of these diverse frameworks has produced varied results with respect to increasing our understanding about the best coping strategies, in part due to design problems which might have obscured their actual utility.

Boynton and Pearce, (1977, pg. 134) took an individual psycho/behavioral approach to describing patterns of adjustment and there differential levels of success in dealing with separation among what they described as "successful copers". The criteria for successful coping was that the wives were experienced (2 prior deployments) and were not selected from those receiving therapy. The authors hypothesized that three general coping strategies: *internalization*, *substitution*, and *replacement* would be utilized in assisting these women to be successful copers.

"Internalization occurs when a person simply accepts the disruptions in his repertoire and episodes and attempts to live with it, using interpersonal coping strategies. Substitution occurs when a person reproduces the original structure of his repertoires by recruiting and training new people to enact which leave the same meaning as to the ones affected by the transition. Replacement occurs when a person learns and adds to his repertoire a set of episodes which have a different meaning than which existed before the transition." (Boynton & Pearce, 1978, pg. 134)

Episodes are "patterned sequences of social action which have subject punctuated boundaries and internal order" (Boynton & Pearce, 1978; Harre & Secord, 1973). What is consistent across all these categories is the active construction of a new psychological and interpersonal reality. The value of their "active" approach is supported by Carlson's findings. When he asked nonactive duty wives to score items representing things that increased, only the "doing nothing" items showed a decline for wives in his samples during the separation period. All other "activities" showed clear increases (Carlson, 1981).

Indeed, it is unfortunate that several design problems and conceptual ambiguities in the study have obscured possibly important findings from a rather ingenious methodological approach. In particular, the concept of internalization is unclear. It appears that there is a psychological passivity implied in the phrase "simply accepts". Certainly, the employment of interpersonal coping strategies however defined, requires an active cognitive psychological adjustment which might be the real substance of "simple" acceptance. Secondly, as Carlson has pointed out, there was no control group and the "success" they enjoyed may have been related to aspects of their lifestyle or current social context, or to their social/psychological history and/or their resultant personality (Carlson, 1981).

Another confusing issue was the selection criteria for the "successful copers". The criteria are described differently in two sections of the article. Finally, the fact that the couples were still married after two

separations is not necessarily a definition of health, and the measure of "able to function" is not well defined.

The results of the Boynton & Pearce study indicated that successfully coping wives used internalization and substitution strategies to the exclusion of replacement strategies (Boynton & Pearce, 1978). It is difficult, however, to interpret the importance of these findings due to the methodological ambiguities mentioned above and because, none of the measures of coping were significantly correlated with any of the outcome measures the authors used.

In Carlson's study, two sets of behavioral responses to separation situations were explored: solitary responses and interactive responses (Carlson, 1981). Solitary responses all involved "individualized consumption of the products of the mass media (eg., going to movies, reading, and watching TV) (Carlson, 1981). Interactive responses included "talking on the phone, visiting neighbors, shopping, etc."

As Carlson noted, the *solitary responses*, are analogous to the "disengagement" activities often studied in gerontological research and are similar to Lazarus's (1974) notion of "managing the unpleasant feelings" and the "managing tension" dimension of coping behaviors described by McCubbin & Patterson (1987).

The *interactive responses* are more similar to the notion of taking direct action to alleviate felt distress, and are similar to behaviors studied in the "activity" approach to coping (Carlson, 1981; Lazarus, 1974). The items of this scale, however, seem to focus on somewhat distractive or substitutive behaviors, which deal primarily with the "isolation" and "aloneness" aspects of the separation (Boynton & Pearce, 1978). They do not focus on actively re-adjusting self or others to deal with specific strains associated with role ambiguity which is inherent in the "married/non-married/married cycle of deployment (Boynton & Pearce, 1978; den Dulk, 1980). This more active approach, again, is more similar to Boynton and Pearce's (1978) replacement coping strategy and to the active problem solving strategies described by Lazarus and McCubbin (Boynton & Pearce, 1978; Lazarus, 1974; McCubbin et al., 1987).

Carlson pointed out that based upon the way in which the items were measured (to reflect increase or decrease of the two types of activities), both "disengagement" and "activity" theories of coping were clearly contradicted in his study. That is, the increase of both solitary and interactive activity was "slightly" associated with becoming more "upset" during separation and not with positive outcomes as might have been expected. Activity seems to follow stress rather than the other way around.

Carlson's conclusion was that his findings did not help identify successful copers but suggested the need for more caution in the psycho/social study of stress and deployment. He went on to point out that the debate in other similar theoretical areas such as gerontological research has shifted, placing greater emphasis on economic resources and their impact on health as predictors of "successful coping" in aging over the coping responses of activity or disengagement (Cutler, 1973; Lemon, 1972; Smith & Lippman, 1972). He suggested that the "activity" approaches in the study of coping with separation might be expected to follow the same path. From the authors' perspective eliminating the "active" approaches to coping from the investigation is a bit premature in that his version of the "active" approach was again, more of a distractive type of activity.

Spurred on by his initial findings, Carlson looked for elements of successful coping in two aspects of the larger social environment, wives clubs participation and paid jobs. The combined participation in the wives' club and the paid job activity increased the effect of each of these activities upon the difficulty index which was his measure of stress. Interestingly enough, however, they were not actually additive but were seen more as alternatives (Carlson, 1981).

While social background factors (age, rank and number of children) did increase the ability to predict more successful coping, they did not detract from the basic patterns which defined all these factors (women's club participation, working, and time orientation) as important elements of coping. Herein lies further evidence that some aspect of these "activities" must exert some impact as yet undefined upon adaptation.

### Measures of Stress or Outcome

What has been learned about the variability of results dependent upon the stress measure in a raft of military stress studies should serve as forewarning about the need to be specific about the criterion measure we use in assessing the effect of coping. For example, Nice (1981) found that while wives who were separated from their husbands due to deployment were more depressed and visited the doctor more often than non-separated wives, the majority of other psychological measures revealed no sub-group differences (Nice, 1981).

Boynton and Pearce (1978) found no correlational relationship between the three coping strategies and four measures of stress, marital happiness, perception of "self" as a good wife, happiness as a Navy wife and happiness with the husband. As they pointed out however, sampling problems may be the real source of the lack of relationship between of the variables.

Without defining the behavioral differences which must exist between working and non-working Army wives in their sample, Manning and DeRouin (1981) reported that 15 out of 60 to 80 possible measured comparisons between working and nonworking wives, indicated better adjustment among working wives. For the moment leaving the design problems in the study aside, it is clear that only a fraction of the measures of stress were related to work status. Again the measure of stress chosen was important.

In her study of civilian couples, Menaghan (1982) found a very complex pattern of relationship between her four measures of coping and two approaches to measuring stress, (ie., reduced felt distress and reduction of later role problems). She summarized:

"Thus, the analyses suggested that *selective ignoring* and *resignation* play a direct role in exacerbating on going distress, but have only an indirect impact on long term problem levels. *Negotiation* shows the opposite pattern, being insignificant in influencing ongoing distress but importantly in eventually reducing problems. Only *optimistic comparisons* is significant both in reducing felt distress and reducing later problems. (Menaghan, 1982, pg. 228)

The findings of Menaghan (1982) also point to the importance of evaluating actual change in measures of stress rather than simply relying upon crosssectional studies.

The present authors' experience further amplifies the complexity of the problem. As an adjunctive track of the larger longitudinal study from which the present study is drawn, the authors participated in a series of "Focus" group sessions with small groups of Navy husbands and wives. The purpose of the sessions was to elicit more detailed and anecdotal information about the stresses, strains and coping strategies the families experienced in their efforts to deal with the impending separation. An interesting finding from these sessions was that for many, the predeployment periods were more stressful and more disruptive to their family life than the deployed phase. With this in mind, we can expect that the statistical analysis of the relationship between change in perceived stress and coping efforts will be influenced by a bidirectional movement with respect to reported levels of stress. That is, for some, the arrival of the actual separation brings a sense of relief and stability while for others it evokes new levels of stress.

This situation is further complicated, by the likelihood that the strains (the specific factors leading to perceived stress) associated with the difficult period prior to deployment will be different than those precipitating stress during the deployment phase. As a result, it is likely that coping strategies which are effective at different points in the deployment cycle will be different (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978).

Also, concerning the importance of the longitudinal perspective, the dependent measures we choose need to be evaluated with respect to the time frame of effect implied by the variable. Measures which have extremely stable test re-test reliability (appearing utterly problem invariant) may be appropriate for measuring person consistency across situations. If however, we are interested in measuring behavioral or situational change, we need more situation sensitive measures.

In most social science disciplines, the nature/nurture debate continues, but with an apparent increasing recognition that some kind of interaction between constitutional (or learned) aspects of the person and aspects of the situation in which he/she is embedded will be the ultimate

determinant of manifest behavior (Endler and Magnusson, 1975). Likewise, whether coping behaviors and strategies are problem specific or problem invariant will probably become a moot question from a theoretical perspective (Lazarus, 1974). Nonetheless, in the course of evaluating coping efforts we need to distinguish between elements of coping which are, from the individuals point of view immutably embedded in either his/her constitutional make-up or the surrounding environment from those actions, resources and behaviors which are alterable either at the micro level of the person or the macro level of the surrounding organizational context (Menaghan, 1982).

McCubbin et al. (1976), for example, studied women whose husbands were missing in action, had one or more children, and had not incorporated the father into the family. After developing a reduced set of coping patterns via open-ended interviews, a series of q-sort methods, and factor analysis, used correlational and multiple regression analysis as a way to describe those characteristics of subjects who use the particular coping behavior patterns. The correlates of the different strategies included pre-crisis marital satisfaction, family developmental stage, legal problems, number of months the subject spent as a child in a military family. Clearly the implication of these findings is theoretically interesting, but at the same time mixed with respect to utility.

Mention of the different types of variables reported in the McCubbin study is not intended to be critical; it is clear that the focus of the analysis was descriptive. Nevertheless, it reflects many of the ambiguities involved and choices that need to be made in variable selection.

In some cases it is difficult to ascertain whether a predictor variable is an individual measure of a measure of social context. A case in point is the working versus nonworking status used in the present study. Is work status more meaningfully thought of as a measure of the social context in which a person is imbedded or a measure of a personal characteristic; either simply social demographic or implying underlying psychological status. As part of another analysis from the present data set, we discovered via a series of t-tests that working and nonworking wives vary



little with respect to an array of social demographic and psychological measures. Our conclusion then, is that work status is most meaningfully viewed as an indicator of different social/behavioral contexts and not individual differences.

### Methods

The present report is taken from a larger longitudinal study of families experiencing regular, long term separations as members of Navy Patrol Aviation Squadrons. Unlike a host of other studies which have focused upon families facing extreme pressures of coping with the absence of fathers and husbands who are missing in action or are prisoners of war, the current sample is perhaps less extraordinary and reflects the experiences of far broader populations (Hunter, 1982, McCubbin et al., 1976). While the larger project covers six phases of the deployment cycle the present analysis is focused upon the third phase, two months after the men have departed.

Again, the overall intent of this analysis is to gain understanding about differences in patterns of coping behaviors valued by Navy wives in two quite different social contexts; those employed outside the home and those whose principal occupation is as homemaker. Further, the analysis will evaluate the relationships between these coping repertoires and several measures of the stress and satisfaction associated with the increased strain imposed by the separation.

#### Subjects:

The subjects consisted of 70 Navy wives of both officers and enlisted personnel in five Patrol Aviation Squadrons deploying to three Pacific sites. The present data is drawn from Phase 1 (two months prior to deployment) and Phase 3 (two months into the deployment cycle) of a six phase longitudinal study. The larger study gathered a variety of data across a broad set of conceptual domains generally described in the outlined in the Family Study Schedule (see Appendix A). Sample statistics are listed in Table 1 and appear to be representative of VP spouses with respect to demographic characteristics.

The women in the study were essentially white, an average age of 31.1 years, had been married 8.9 years, having a mean of 2.0 children. Nearly 16 percent of the subjects had completed high school, 44.3 percent had some college and 21.4 percent had completed college or graduate school. A full 47.1 percent of the women reported current incomes of over \$2000.00 per month and the majority, 82.8 percent felt that their level of income was either good or "O.K.". It is worth noting that with respect to

Table 1

## GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	WHOLE GROUP	NONWORKING	WORKING
<b>SAMPLE SIZE</b>	70	33	37
<b>AGE (Years)</b>			
Range	20-47	21-39	20-47
Mean	31.10	30.06	32.03
	(%)	(%)	(%)
<b>EDUCATION*</b>			
No High School	5.7	12.1	0.0
High School	15.7	9.1	21.6
Trade/Vocational	8.6	6.1	10.8
Some College	44.3	48.5	40.5
College Graduate	21.4	18.2	24.3
Graduate School	4.3	6.1	2.7
<b>NUMBER OF CHILDREN</b>			
No Children	1.4	3.1	0.0
One Child	31.9	21.9	40.5
Two	42.0	43.8	40.5
Three	18.8	21.9	16.2
Four or More	5.8	9.4	2.7
<b>BASE HOUSING</b>			
Yes	38.6	48.5	29.7
No	61.4	51.5	70.3
<b>ETHNIC BACKGROUND</b>			
Caucasian	85.7	84.8	86.5
Black	1.4	0.0	2.7
Hispanic	4.3	3.0	5.4
Pacific Islander	8.6	12.1	5.4
<b>RELIGION</b>			
Christian	27.1	24.2	29.7
Protestant	37.1	27.3	45.9
Catholic	28.6	36.4	21.6
Jewish	1.4	3.0	2.7
Other	5.7	9.1	0.0
<b>MONTHLY INCOME</b>			
(Com bined)			
\$750 - 1000	5.7	12.1	1.6
\$1000 - 1500	18.6	27.3	10.8
\$1500 - 2000	28.6	30.3	27.0
Over \$2000	47.1	30.3	62.2
<b>RATINGS/FINANCIAL SITUATION</b>			
Good	17.1	18.2	16.2
O.K.	65.7	63.6	67.6
Difficult	17.1	18.2	16.2

\* Indicates T-test, Chi square probabilities where  $p < .05$ , between working and nonworking groups.

income satisfaction, the way in which the question is posed seems to alter the response considerably. For example, when asked whether they were concerned about having enough money for basic expenses, 68.4 percent said they were moderately or very concerned. This high level of concern appears to be in contradiction with the large number of women who expressed high satisfaction with their income.

For this analysis, as discussed below, the women were divided into groups with respect to their work status at the time of data collection. Thirty-seven women (52.8%) were working in paid jobs outside the home and 33 (47.1%) were exclusively occupied at home. Of the working wives the vast majority, 83.4 percent, were planning to continue working beyond six months and were working both because of financial need and personal desire to do so (72%).

Based upon t-tests and contingency table analyses, depending upon data type, social/demographic differences between working and nonworking wives were judged to be statistically non-significant with the expected exception of level of joint family income and level of education (see Table 1). It is nonetheless interesting to note that the difference between working and nonworking wives with respect to income is only significant at the .049 level.

Examination of the contingency table for work status and education reveals that the statistically significant difference between the groups is mainly accounted for by the lower levels of education. Working wives indicated higher education in general.

#### Data Collection Procedures:

Approximately four months prior to deployment the larger project plan was presented to active duty personnel and their participation solicited as well as permission to contact their spouses obtained. With permission, in telephone follow-up 95% of those women contacted agreed to participate in the full six phase study. After the project was explained, informed consent forms were obtained for those who agreed to participate.

Due to the Human Subjects protocol utilized, social/demographic characteristics of those who chose not to participate compared to those who agreed cannot be precisely determined. However, comparison of individual and family variable frequencies across demographic and social-psychological variables indicate that the sample is analogous to Navy studies reported

elsewhere (Carlson, 1981; McCubbin et al, 1980). Like other "normal" family studies, it is likely that the most severely disturbed and isolated families are under represented. However, in that the focus of the present study is upon "effective" coping behavior, this under-representation, while not entirely meaningless, is of less importance. Also, the variables under consideration in this study do have sample variances comparable to normal populations.

Questionnaires upon which the present analysis is based and which required approximately forty-five minutes to one hour and fifteen minutes to complete were mailed to the subjects and their spouses simultaneously at two months after the beginning of the deployment.

#### Research Measures:

Coping Behaviors. The primary measure of coping behaviors used to predict separation and coping outcomes was the Family Coping Inventory (FCI) developed by McCubbin et al. (McCubbin, Boss, Wilson & Dahl, 1981). The FCI was developed to assess the ways in which spouses perceived their overall responses to family separation which is permanent (e.g. divorce), recurs repeatedly (e.g. corporate-executive business) or, as in the present study, for extended periods (e.g., military assignments) (McCubbin & Patterson, 1987).

The overall design of the FCI focuses upon three levels of abstraction including coping behaviors (the specific items on the questionnaire), coping patterns (factor analytically derived homogeneous sets of behaviors), and strategies (the combination of patterns used by an individual) (McCubbin & Patterson, 1987).

As described by McCubbin & Patterson (1987) the theoretical foundation of the inventory is an amalgamation of concepts from social support theory, family stress theory, and psychological coping theory. The joint position of these theories suggest that effective coping by an individual with a stressful situation is a function of:

1. The individual and family's use of emotional, esteem and concrete network support from their surrounding community (social support theory);
2. The interaction of components of the double ABCX model of family stress and coping which includes the definition the family makes of the

situation, the resources they used to manage internal and external strain (precipitants of stress) connected to the stress experienced (family stress theory); and

3. The use of both active (situation change focus) and passive (situation distractive) behaviors to cope with stress attendant to the stressor event (psychological coping theory).

The FCI, reflecting elements of the appraisal and coping aspects of the Double ABCX model of coping from Hill's original ABCX model of family stress and coping, asks respondents to score each of 70 items on the scale as to "how helpful" each behavior has been in helping her cope with the separation experience (Hill, 1949; Lazarus, 1974; McCubbin & Patterson, 1987). It is scaled from zero to three, (not helpful, minimally helpful, moderately helpful, or very helpful) (see Appendix B). An inherent shortcoming of the scale is that it measures the degree of "perceived helpfulness" but does not inform us about the frequency with which a given behavior is used by an individual. Further, as will be discussed later, the perceived and actual effects of these patterns of behavior vis-a-vis measurable outcomes may be quite different.

McCubbin et al. (1980) utilized an earlier version of the FCI which included 84 items to study the coping patterns used by 82 wives whose husbands were on an 8 month sea deployment. The five scales (coping patterns) used in this present study were generated via factor analysis of 30 items selected from that total set on the basis of applicability to the situation, clarity, variance, and duplication (McCubbin & Patterson, 1987) (1).

The content of the factors which emerged from the McCubbin study (see Appendix B for the item contents) were as follows:

1. **Maintaining Family Integrity.** Seven behaviors which center around doing things together as a family, especially with the children.

(1) A factor analysis of the present sample was also conducted utilizing an enlarged item pool of 34 items thought by the authors to be relevant for our population. The factors which emerged from the analysis were different to some extent but actually quite similar. These factors (patterns) however, will be evaluated in future analyses.

2. **Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support.** Five items which focus upon the wife's efforts to develop meaningful and supportive relationships outside the family unit.
3. **Managing Psychological Tension and Strain.** Six items which describe somewhat distractive behaviors for reducing perceived stress and tension resulting from the separation.
4. **Believing Surrounding Institutions & Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation.** Six behaviors which emphasize a psychological resignation to and acceptance of the stressful situation.
5. **Developing Self Reliance and Self Esteem.** Four items which center around active self development and growth behaviors.

The reader will note that the title for Pattern #4 has been changed in the present study to denote what the authors' feel the scale to more accurately represent. None of the items in the scale mentioned mentioned the wives' belief in the husband's career except by stretched inference.

Dependent measures: The dependent variables used in this study represent different measures of the outcome of the women's coping efforts including a dysphoria scale, the CES-D Scale, marital satisfaction, two measures of health, and a single measure of satisfaction with overall Navy life. These measures have elsewhere and in our own data set been to one degree or another linked with the strains of separation (Hunter, 1982; Nice, 1981; McCubbin et al., 1980). Examples of each of the measures are found in Appendix B.

Dysphoria. The dysphoria scale is an adaptation of the eight item scale developed by Pearlin and Schooler to measure stress within a specific social context (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Subjects were instructed to rate each of the eight descriptors on a five point likert scale in response to the open statement, "When you think of your daily life, how often do you feel...?". The possible responses were: bothered, worried, contented, frustrated, satisfied, unhappy, tense and lonely.

The use of this general form of the question rather than a more situation specific (i.e., at work, at home, with children) is different from that of Pearlin and Schooler (1978) who were attempting to measure the impact of a particular coping approach vis-a-vis particular, concisely defined patterns of strain (the actual contents of the stressful situation), upon the situation specific dysphoria (bothered, worried, unhappy,

contented, etc). The more global question was used in the present study in the interest of reducing instrument length. And as planned, it is studied here in the context of other measures.

Pearlin and Schooler (1978) distinguished between emotional stress and other "negative states" such as extreme anxiety and depression. Emotional stress, they suggested, was more specific in that it "is determined by particularly stressful and threatening circumstances in the environment and by being a condition with clear boundaries rather than an enveloping total state of the organism" (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978).

For this study, the Pearlin and Schooler measure of dysphoria is used with the thought that it may be more situation dependent, and responsive to variations in coping efforts. Nevertheless, we recognize that enduring intrapersonal factors or larger passive aspects of the person's situation (such as personal and family resources) may account for some degree of stability in the measure. The psychometric properties of the dysphoria scale in other studies were quite good. The alpha coefficient for the scale in the present study is also quite respectable at .8782.

CES-D Scale. "Depression" is measured by the 20 item Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D) which was designed to measure depression symptomatology in the general population. This instrument has been known to have high internal consistency and adequate test-retest reliability (Radloff, 1977). It has been construct validated by multiple methods including strong patterns of inter-correlations with other self report measures, with clinical ratings of depression as well as correlations with other measures. In the present sample, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .7540. A particular advantage of the CES-D Scale is that it has been widely validated across multiple samples and does not owe its content to studies primarily focused upon the more skewed clinical population. As such, it is sensitive to a wide range of symptom severity (Radloff, 1977).

Marital Happiness. The marital happiness scale (developed by Neil Jacobson, 1980) measures the degree of happiness scored on a ten-point scale from completely unhappy through neutral to completely happy. The eleven items on the scale which comprise of the total score used here assess how the subject feels about her/his marital partner with respect to such aspects of marital life as consideration, affection, household responsibilities, sex, etc. While the content of these items in a sense force



a reduced score during the deployment phase in that they refer to interpersonal interaction (e.g., consideration, sex, social activities), the authors' suspect that the measure meaningfully reflects the variability of perceived marital happiness over time and in the context of deployment. Other popular measures such as the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) and the Lock-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale are apparently more stable over time and thus might be less useful as measures of marital satisfaction vis-a-vis changes in social circumstances (Spanier, 1976). The whole group alpha reliability measure for the sample is a respectable .8490.

Health Measures: Personal health was measured from two perspectives. First, subjects were asked to indicate how often (never, rarely, sometimes, frequently) they experienced a list of physical symptoms. The total of the set of twenty items was used as the dependent variable. The alpha statistic for this measure was .7834 for the study sample.

A second measure was the global rating by the individual of their health status. This type of health measure has been shown in other contexts to be a remarkably fruitful approach to assessing "actual" health maintaining accuracy and reliability despite its apparent simplicity (Garrity et al., 1978).

Overall Satisfaction. The overall satisfaction measure asks the respondent to indicate how satisfied they are with all aspects of Navy life on a five point scale ranging from "very dissatisfied" to "very satisfied" with a neutral category of "not sure" at the mid-point.

#### Analysis Plan:

Analysis of the data will proceed in two major steps. First, via t-tests for differences between means, working and nonworking wives will be compared with respect to their status on the six measure of stress or satisfaction. The groups will also be compared on the five (5) coping patterns.

Next, a series of multiple regression analyses, using a combination of forced and stepwise entry procedures, will be conducted. The dependent variables to be predicted will be the six measures of stress, dysphoria, depression, marital satisfaction, two health measures and the assessment of overall satisfaction with Navy life. The predictor variables for each regression equation will include the Phase 1 or Phase 2 (baseline) measure of the dependent variable entered first and alone, followed by the FCI

coping scales entered in a stepwise fashion. The effect of forcing the baseline predeployment measures of the dependent variable in the equation first is that the remaining variables will be correlated with the residual of the correlation between Phase 1 and Phase 3 measures. This residual is in essence the bidirectional change in the dependent variable, stress, from baseline to Phase 3 (Cohen & Cohen, 1975). As such, the residual represents change in the measures of stress associated with the separation of deployment.

## RESULTS

### T-Tests for differences between stress/satisfaction measures.

The results of the t-tests for differences between the groups with respect to the measures of outcome are displayed in Table 2. Given the previous literature which at least offered partial support for expected differences between working and nonworking wives, it is interesting to note that none of measures differentiated the groups at Phase 3 of the deployment cycle.

TABLE 2

Comparison Between Working and NonWorking Wives  
Measures of Stress at  
Phase 3

	Working X	SD	NonWorking X	SD	F Value	2-Tail Prob.
1). Dysphoria	23.84	5.43	25.55	5.81	1.14	.694
2). Depression	16.86	11.46	17.64	10.53	1.18	.633
3). Marital Happiness	70.14	19.41	66.82	16.33	1.41	.325
4). Health Symptoms	30.24	7.48	29.12	6.67	1.26	.513
5). Health (Self Report)	3.16	.76	3.18	.80	1.12	.741
6). Overall Navy Life Satisfaction	3.24	1.09	3.77	1.13	1.07	.849

Table 3 depicts the between group comparisons for working and nonworking wives with respect to the five coping dimensions.

**TABLE 3**  
Comparison Between Working and Nonworking Wives  
Family Coping Inventory Scales (FCI)  
Phase 3

	Working			Nonworking			F Value	2-Tail Prob.
	Relative Mean	X	SD	Relative Mean	X	SD		
1). Maintaining Family Integrity	1.94	9.73	3.24	2.10	10.06	3.22	1.01	.981
2). Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support	1.75	8.75	3.25	1.97	9.85	.65	1.35	.397
3). Managing Psychological Tension and Strain	1.35	6.27	2.41	1.45	7.33	3.91	2.63	.006
4). Believing in Surrounding Institutions and Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation	1.86	11.16	2.71	1.95	11.75	4.27	2.42	.009
5). Development Self-Reliance and Self-Esteem	1.95	7.81	2.32	2.08	8.33	3.28	1.99	.046

The scores for Coping Pattern #1, "Maintaining Family Integrity" and Coping Pattern #2, "Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support" were not statistically different for the working and nonworking wives. For both groups, the mean endorsements of the behaviors making up these scales were actually quite high as indicated in the column labeled "Relative mean". This score is the group mean divided by the number of items on the scale and can be evaluated on the same scale as the items themselves (0 = not helpful -3 = very helpful). That is, both groups felt that the behaviors, or attitudes reflected in the scales were in the moderately helpful range when averaged across the items. Both groups also had approximately the same level of homogeneity of variance.

Coping Pattern #3, "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain", #4, "Believing in Surrounding Institutions and Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation", and #5, "Developing Self-Reliance and Self-Esteem", were all significantly different with respect to mean scores between the groups.

The "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain" pattern was perceived to be significantly more helpful for nonworking wives than for working wives ( $F=2.63$ ,  $p=.006$ ). However, it should be noted that the variance in the nonworking group is quite broad. This fact will be explored further in future studies. Based upon the findings quoted in the methods section that nonworking wives group contains a substantial number of women with less than high school education, it is likely that the statistical interaction may be present here. That is, it is likely that the less educated, nonworking wives used the "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain" approach, which is conceptually related to the essentially dysfunctional coping patterns described in other studies more frequently than those who have achieved higher education levels (Lazarus, 1974; Menaghan, 1982).

Coping Pattern #4, "Believing in Surrounding Institutions and Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation", was also significantly different ( $F=2.54$ ,  $p=.005$ ) for the two groups. But again, with notable differences with respect to within group variance. Again, nonworking wives endorsed these behaviors more than working wives.

Nonworking wives felt that the behaviors related to the effort to "Developing Self-Reliance and Self-Esteem" were more helpful in coping with separation than did the working wives ( $F=1.99$ ,  $p=.049$ ). However, the difference was less dramatic and within group differences more equal.

### Multiple Regression Analyses

The next two sub-sections report the findings of the serial multiple regression studies which utilize six different measures of stress related to deployment as dependent variables and the five measures of coping patterns, as predictors. The first section represents the profile of relationships for the 33 women who were not working in paid employment outside the home. The second section regards the wives working in paid employment outside the home. The overall regression equations, with the associated part-correlation coefficients and incremental multiple  $R^2$  values are laid out in Table 4.

#### Nonworking wives

Dysphoria. The Phase 2 measure of dysphoria when forced into the equation first was moderately correlated with Phase 3 dysphoria measure ( $R^2=.30$ ,  $p=.0011$ ). Thus, while there was some stability between measurement periods there was also significant variation in dysphoric mood. After the step-wise regression of the five FCI coping patterns, only two remained in the equation. When the dimension "Maintaining Family Integrity" was entered, the  $R^2$  increased to .40 ( $p=.001$ ), and when the "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain" dimension was entered the  $R^2$  increased further to .55 ( $p=.0000$ ). With the two FCI dimensions and the prior dysphoria score we were thus able to explain 55% of the variance in Phase 3 dysphoria for the nonworking wives. The two coping dimensions alone explained 20% of the overall variance. Looking at the direction of influence indicated in the part-correlation coefficients, it is important to note that the "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain" dimension was positively associated with increases in dysphoria.

Depression. For this subgroup there was slightly more stability on the measure of depression between Phase 1 and Phase 3 score than for dysphoria ( $R^2=.43$ ,  $p=.0000$ ). None of the FCI coping dimensions added significantly to the explanation of variation in depression between the

TABLE 4  
Multiple Regression Analyses

PHASE THREE	WORKING WIVES (N=37) Part Corr. R <sup>2</sup>	NONWORKING WIVES (N=33) Part Corr. R <sup>2</sup>
Dysphoria and FCI Coping Patterns:		
Phase 2 Dysphoria	.3238 <sup>1</sup>	.5293
Maintaining Family Integrity	-----	-.4147 <sup>2</sup>
Managing Psychological Tension and Strain	.3797 <sup>2</sup>	.3872 <sup>1</sup>
		.5462
Depression and FCI Coping Patterns		
Phase 1 Depression	.6442	.6541
		.4278
Marital Happiness and FCI Coping Patterns		
Phase 1 Marital Happiness	.3851 <sup>1</sup>	.4020 <sup>1</sup>
Maintaining Family Integrity	-----	.3502 <sup>1</sup>
		.1546 <sup>1</sup>
		.2773 <sup>2</sup>
Symptom Total and FCI Coping Patterns		
Phase 1 Symptom Total	.6067	.5798
Believing in Surrounding Institutions	-----	
& Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation	-----	.4188 <sup>3</sup>
		.6050
Rate Health and FCI Coping Pattern:		
Phase 1 self-rated health	.7023	.4814 <sup>1</sup>
		.2318 <sup>2</sup>
Satisfaction with Navy Life and FCI Coping Pattern:		
Phase 1 Satisfaction w. Navy life	.5073	.5123
Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support	-.3666	-----
Maintaining Family Integrity	-----	.3831 <sup>2</sup>
		.5617

1 = p < .065

2 = p < .01

3 = p < .001

phases. This finding indicates that: 1) this characteristic of the individuals remained relatively stable through the transition from pre to during deployment, and 2) that reports of useful coping behaviors by the wives had no significant relationship with levels of depression.

Marital Happiness. Phase 1 and Phase 3 marital happiness were moderately correlated ( $R^2 = .16$ ,  $p=.024$ ). When the family coping dimensions were entered into the equation, only one dimension, "Maintaining Family Integrity", was significantly related to marital happiness in Phase 3. With the addition of this variable to the regression formula, the  $R^2$  increased from .15 to .28. Generally, focusing activities upon the family seemed to have a significant, if not overwhelming, effect on the wife's assessment of the marital relationship while her husband was on deployment.

Symptomatic Health. The Phase 1 presumably baseline measure of physical symptoms was significantly correlated with the Phase 3 measure ( $R^2=.43$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Following the stepwise entry of the coping patterns, only the "Believing in the Surrounding Institutions and Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation" pattern remained explaining approximately 18% of the variance in symptom reporting over and above that accounted for by the baseline measure ( $R^2=.61$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

Personal Health Assessment. The Phase 1 measure of personal health, the individual's assessment of how healthy they were, was moderately correlated ( $R^2=.23$ ,  $p=.005$ ) with the Phase 3 measure. Adding the family coping dimensions to the equation netted no significant relationships between the family coping dimensions and the nonworking wives own personal rating of physical health.

Overall Satisfaction with Navy life. There was some consistency between Phase 1 and Phase 3 measures of overall satisfaction with Navy life, Phase 1 scores explained a full 42% of the variance in Phase 3 scores. When the five coping dimensions were entered into the equation, only the "Maintaining Family Integrity" measure added anything significant to the variation in overall satisfaction with Navy life ( $R^2=.56$ ,  $p=.000$ ). Nevertheless, the 15% increase in the ability to explain satisfaction with Navy life by the "Maintaining Family Integrity" coping dimension is not small.



## Working Wives

The following is a description of the multiple regression equation similar to that discussed above for the nonworking wives. In this group there are 37 women who have identified themselves as people who work outside the home in paid employment and intend to do so beyond the reunion period.

Dysphoria. The Phase 2 dysphoria score was only slightly related to the Phase 3 score with only 9% of the variance in Phase 3 accounted for by the Phase 2 score ( $R^2=.09$ ,  $p=.073$ ). When the family coping inventory dimensions were added to the equation, only the "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain" scale added to the explanation of variance in dysphoria. The combination of Phase 2 Dysphoria and "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain" produced an  $R^2$  of .23 ( $p=.011$ ), indicating that together they explained only 23% of the variance in Phase 3 dysphoria. It is important to note that the "Managing Psychological Tension and Strain" dimension alone explained 14% of the variation in the dysphoria score for these working wives..

Depression. Much like the nonworking wives, the working wives remained somewhat consistent between Phase 1 and Phase 3 with respect to their level of depression ( $R^2 = .41$ ,  $p=.000$ ).

Marital Happiness. Similar to the nonworking wives, the Marital Happiness score at Phase 1 was only moderately correlated with the Marital Happiness total at Phase 3 for the working wives ( $R^2=.15$ ,  $p=.019$ ). Unlike the former group (the nonworking wives) however, for whom "Maintaining Family Integrity" was an important contributor to maintaining a positive sense of marital happiness, the none of the coping patterns remained in the equation for working wives.

Symptomatic Health. The relationship between Phase 1 and Phase 2 was moderate ( $R^2=.37$ ,  $p=.0000$ ). None of the Family Coping Inventory patterns were significantly correlated with the change in health from Phase 1 to Phase 3 for the working wives.

Personal Health Assessment. The Phase 1 global measure of personal health was very highly correlated with the Phase 3 measure of health

explaining a full 49% of the variance between the two variables. Like the symptom totals, this was the only variable of the set which was correlated with Phase 3 health, none of the coping behaviors was related to the working wives' self assessment of their health.

Overall Satisfaction with Navy life. Unlike the nonworking wives, there was very minimal relationship between the Phase 1 baseline global attitude towards Navy life and the Phase 3 attitude assessment ( $R^2 = .16$ ,  $p = .013$ ). When the FCI variables were step-wise entered into the equation, only one pattern remained. The "Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support pattern was significantly related to overall satisfaction, explaining an additional 13% of the variance over and above the Phase 1 measure of satisfaction. Interestingly, the sign of the part-correlation coefficient indicates that those who felt this approach to coping was most useful were the least satisfied with overall Navy life.

## Discussion

Before embarking on a discussion of the findings of this research, it is important to remind the reader about the nature of coping assessment the FCI patterns represent. Specifically, the items which comprise the scales are the subjects' assessment of the "helpfulness" of the item of behavior (thoughts included as behavior) in their adjustment to the separation. The items do not measure 1) the actual frequency with which the behaviors are employed; 2) the full universe of coping behaviors available to individuals; 3) the actual relationship between either the evaluation or the use of these coping behaviors and levels of stress or other outcomes. With this in mind, it will be remembered that the analysis evaluates the empirical relationship between what wives "feel" or "think" are useful strategies and various measures of outcome rather than the effect of particular coping behaviors on these outcomes. In a sense, the empirical findings are actually tests of the accuracy of the wives' perception of what helps with respect to the specific criterion measures.

Adding to the controversy already in the literature, there were no statistically significant differences between the working and nonworking wives on any of the measures of stress or outcome (Table 2) at Phase 3 (Hunter, 1982; Manning and DeRouin, 1981). It is worth noting, however, that the change from Phase 1 to Phase 3 as reflected in the correlations between the phases (see Table 4) is quite different for the two groups. This difference in the amount of change suggests that, with respect to at least Dysphoria and Overall Satisfaction with Navy Life, the nonworking wives experience the separation as being less disruptive. Indeed, in another study in progress, it appears that nonworking wives shown less predeployment concern about dealing with predeployment stress and less concern about being able to handle the emotional aspects of the deployment itself.

Also, findings from our in-progress studies on differences in the levels of a variety of concerns between working and nonworking wives (deployment concerns, children concerns, work concerns, spousal concerns, etc.), indicate that working mothers are generally express greater concern across each of the domains. Bringing this fact together, with the present

findings that changes in levels of these situation sensitive stress measures of stress are greater for working than nonworking wives suggests that the working wives are indeed experiencing more role strain and role conflict during the separation. Nevertheless, they seem to be coping equally well.

In addition to these group differences, both working and nonworking wives showed differences with respect to the "sensitivity" or "reactivity" of the measures to the separation experience. The CESD (depression) scale and the Health Symptom total scores for Phase 1 and Phase 3 were very highly correlated, indicating only moderate change across the separation period. With respect to depression, this finding is in accord that reported by others (Nice, 1981).

On the other hand, the Dysphoria scale and the Marital Happiness scale were only minimally correlated between baseline and Phase 3. This apparent difference in sensitivity to impacts of changes due to separation will be of importance in interpreting found relationships between coping patterns and stress and satisfaction measures. Depression and physical symptoms would be expected, and indeed are) less related to the use or evaluation of coping strategies in that there is initially less variance to be explained between the phases.

The findings in Table 3 indicate in general and on the average that both working and nonworking wives evaluated all of the coping strategies at or below the level of "moderately helpful". Further, the working wives, reported that the approaches were slightly less than "moderately helpful" on all of the scales. At some point in the future it would be important to study the characteristics of women in this sample with respect to their level of valuation of the particular coping strategies as was done by McCubbin et al, (1976) with their sample. The wide variance indicated for the nonworking wives, in particular, suggests some other meaningful differences between members of this group. As reported in the methods section, the nonworking wives contained a large number of women with very minimal education. Perhaps level of education, as was reported by McCubbin et al (1976) is also an important variable to be considered in this sample.

It is difficult to interpret the mean scores (in Table 3) without the benefit of other directly comparable data. However, in the present sample, nonworking wives clearly evaluated the coping patterns of the FCI more favorably than did the working wives. On three patterns, the nonworking

wives scored statistically significantly higher, and the trend of relationship between the two groups was the same on the other two patterns. In general, this finding might be related to a tendency noted elsewhere for working wives to perceive themselves as less able to cope with separation despite the lack of measurable differences (Manning and DeRouin, 1981)

On the other hand, given that the working wives would be expected to circulate across a more diverse set of social environments or settings, they may simply need to employ quite different strategies appropriate to those settings (Barker, 1976; Pearlin and Schooler, 1978). The different strategies would be "appropriate" in the sense that the demands of the social context or types of strains (the specific characteristics of the setting leading to stress) to some extent determines the type of coping strategy used (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978). In the world of work for example, active efforts to change or manipulate the situation may be repeatedly frustrated by the sheer enormity of the task as well as the prevailing balance of power. As described by Pearlin and Schooler (1978) people (usually men) in the work setting tended to take more cognitive approaches to coping, psychologically manipulating their goals and values rather than attempting to alter those of the larger organization. At home, more direct, active approaches can be more useful.

A third hypothesis which might explain the higher scores for nonworking wives would be that, as noted in previous research, they are coping with less and thus require less for their coping efforts to feel successful. Each of these hypotheses will be tested in future studies.

#### FCI patterns and coping efficacy.

Turning to the regression equations (presented in Table 4) in general and across both groups, it appears that for both groups, there is a sparse relationship between the FCI coping patterns which the wives reported were at least "moderately helpful", and the outcome measures. Given the nature of the scales as mentioned previously, it is difficult to interpret these findings. Future research might profitably utilize coping measures of those behaviors the wives actually use. Perhaps the relationship would be more directly interpretable. Of course, the logistical difficulty in obtaining such measures would be formidable.

Another reason that the relationships are so sparse might be that the implicit measures that the wives use to assess the "helpfulness" of a given approach are different than the criterion measures used here and elsewhere. Were it true that these implicit measures used by the wives were different, this would certainly explain the source of much contradiction in military family stress research and frustration on the part of researchers attempting to document the effects of the "strains" of deployment so vocally claimed by military wives in all branches of the military (Nice, 1981; Hunter, 1982)

One possible approach to dealing with this methodological problem in future research might be to use some variant of the "template matching technique" forwarded by Bem (1979). His generally ipsative approach allows individuals much more freedom in defining both the criterion measure of their adjustment to various environments and the personal and situational correlates as well.

Another of the findings which applies to the whole group is the Managing Psychological Tension and Strain pattern of coping is clearly positively associated with increases in dysphoric mood. The wives, in general, were themselves apparently aware of the pitfalls of this approach in that both reported this pattern to be the least useful. In the "Focus" groups mentioned earlier, several wives in discussing the pros and cons of social support groups strongly disavowed any desire to participate in "bitch" sessions with no real positive, programmed intent.

Embedded in the relationship between change in dysphoria and Managing Psychological Tension and Strain is also affirmation of several findings reported elsewhere. Certainly, those aspects of the pattern which are not present time oriented support Carlson's findings that wives who focused upon the past experienced the most difficulty (Carlson, 1981). For those wives there appears to be a sense of resignation about their ability to effect changes on the strains which effect their dysphoric mood. The implication here is, of course, that present or future orientation whenever achievable whether from a program or clinical perspective will assist wives in their efforts to feel competent and decrease distress.

As also mentioned by Carlson, the Managing Psychological Tension and Strain dimension is similar to Lazarus' (1974) notion of managing unpleasant feelings, and his own "solitary" responses which have both be associated with negative outcomes. Three times over, the use of these

solitary, negativistic approaches have been linked to higher levels of distress. While it might be said that there is a kind of circular reasoning in these statements, that is, the negativistic approaches might be simply the approaches used by dysphoric people, this does not appear to be the case. Assuming that the class of negativistic people would be captured in the Depression scale, we would assume that the circular logic criticism would be supported if there was a strong relationship between those who use the Managing Psychological Tension and Strain approach and those who are most depressed. In fact, this does not appear to be the case, in that the correlation is quite minimal, as is the case with the Dysphoria scale as well.

Not surprisingly when looking at the differences in the profiles of relationships between the coping strategies and the outcome measures, for the two groups independently, the nonworking wives are quite different from the working wives. For the working wives, the relationship between the Managing Psychological Tension and Strain and change in dysphoria and the peculiar finding of a negative relationship between Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support and change in overall satisfaction with Navy life, were the only two significant correlations. The Managing Psychological Tension and Strain pattern was discussed above.

The negative relationship between Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support and satisfaction with overall Navy life is at first blush somewhat of an anomaly considering the multiple reports in the literature about the importance of social support, friendship networks and wives' club participation as mediators against the stress of separation (Carlson, 1981; McCubbin and Patterson, 1980; Hunter, 1982). However, a closer look at the item contents of the scale suggests some possible explanations. First, it may be that a significant proportion of those women who evaluate these behaviors positively are also the same women who positively evaluate the Managing Psychological Tension and Strain pattern discussed above. Items 70 and 32 and to some lesser extent item 54 do seem to reflect a kind of negativism and "problem" focus.

Another possibility is that the quality of overall Navy life is to a large extent a measure of the degree of success the wives experience in making friends, participation in supportive activities, and etc. It is likely that working wives simply do not have enough time to participate in these activities even though they may desire to do so. Thus the negative

association between change in overall satisfaction and Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support may be more a measure of satisfaction with the wives' social life than with the use of the behaviors to mediate against distress. In support of this notion is the fact that this scale is not related to dysphoria as was the Managing Psychological Tension and Strain pattern.

The nonworking wives, as would be expected, seem to gain substantially from their involvement with their families. Dysphoria, the marital happiness scale and the overall satisfaction with Navy life were all significantly related to the pattern of Maintaining Family Integrity, an active involvement in family life. In another analysis, the areas of most concern for the nonworking wives were also related to child and spousal issues. The family then serves as both a source of mediation against the stress of separation as well as a source of concern, as hassels and as uplifts. In future studies, the authors will attempt to ferret out the ways in which these women might integrate these hassels and uplifts towards a positive resolution (ie., decreased or stable levels of dysphoria.)

Finally, the relationship between Believing in Surrounding Institutions and Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation and the symptom total health measure for the nonworking wives is a bit perplexing. Perhaps, the increases in the use of medical facilities as a source of social support, noted elsewhere in the literature, might be common among housewives (Nice, 1981). If this is in fact, the case, perhaps the support and care that they get increases their faith in larger institutions on the whole.



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APPENDIX A

# FAMILY STUDY SCHEDULE

Phase 1 (2 mo. prior)	Phase 2 (2 weeks prior)	Phase 3 (2 mo. into)	Phase 4 (5 mo. into)	Phase 5 (2 weeks post)	Phase 6 (2 mo. post)
Background/SES Religion Navy status Help seeking Duty satisfaction Navy satisfaction Leisure activities	Deployment expectations Family and relative Deployment plans Deployment expectations Appraisal (self)	Income Deployment stress Deployment problem Work environment Visits to family Re-enlistment decisions Wife work attitudes Life stressors	Deployment stresses Reunion expect./concerns Deployment communication Deployment experience Wife's employment Employment satisfaction Employment social support	Stress change Reunion experiences Communication Family of origin	Deployment stresses Reunion review Androgyny scale Navy satisfaction
Attitudes towards navy Health Pearlin stress Parenting coping Homemaker satisfaction Service utilization Areas of concern FACES Hassles and uplifts Marital happiness Dyadic adjustment Family strengths Who does what CES-D scale Social support	Attitudes towards navy Health Pearlin stress Parenting coping Homemaker satisfaction Areas of concern FACES Hassles and uplifts Marital happiness Dyadic adjustment Family strengths Who does what CES-D scale Social support Adjective Check List	Attitudes towards navy Health Pearlin stress Parenting coping Areas of concern FACES Hassles and uplifts Marital happiness CES-D scale Social support Family Coping Invent. Self-efficacy	Attitudes towards navy Health Pearlin stress Parenting coping Service utilization Areas of concern FACES Marital happiness CES-D scale Social support Adjective Check List Family Coping Invent. Self-efficacy Sexual relationship	Health Pearlin stress Service utilization FACES Hassles and uplifts Marital happiness Dyadic adjustment Family strengths Who does what CES-D scale Adjective Check List	Attitudes toward the navy Health Pearlin stress Service utilization FACES Hassles and uplifts Marital happiness Dyadic adjustment Family strengths Who does what CES-D scale

APPENDIX B

# FCI

## FAMILY COPING INVENTORY

Separation and Single Parent Status

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### PURPOSE

FCI is designed to record the behaviors wives or husbands find helpful to them in managing family life when spouses are separated for short, long, or permanent periods of time. Coping is defined as individual or group behavior used to manage the hardships and relieve the discomfort associated with life changes or difficult life events.

### DIRECTIONS

- On the next two pages is a list of "behaviors" or statements that spouses may or may not use to cope with a separation experience. Please carefully consider "how helpful" each of these behaviors has been to you in your adjustment to separation.
- Circle one of the following responses for each statement:
  - 3 Very Helpful
  - 2 Moderately Helpful
  - 1 Minimally Helpful
  - 0 Not Helpful
- Please be sure and record a response for every item.



<div> <div>Not Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Very Helpful</div> </div>				COPING BEHAVIORS	<div> <div>Not Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Very Helpful</div> </div>				COPING BEHAVIORS
0	1	2	3	1 Talking with other individuals in my same situation	0	1	2	3	20 Building close relationships with people
0	1	2	3	2 Going to school	0	1	2	3	21 Taking advantage of professional counseling
0	1	2	3	3 Learning new skills	0	1	2	3	22 Involvement in activities specifically for someone in my situation
0	1	2	3	4 Developing myself as a person	0	1	2	3	23 Establishing a new life for myself
0	1	2	3	5 Making financial investments/savings	0	1	2	3	24 Drinking alcohol
0	1	2	3	6 Doing things with the family	0	1	2	3	25 Always counting on relatives to help me out
0	1	2	3	7 Involvement in religious activities	0	1	2	3	26 Being active in the local community
0	1	2	3	8 Trying to be a father and a mother to the children	0	1	2	3	27 Doing things with relatives
0	1	2	3	9 Allowing myself to become angry	0	1	2	3	28 Reliving the past; reflecting on the memorable moments
0	1	2	3	10 Believing that my husband's career is most important	0	1	2	3	29 Crying
0	1	2	3	11 Always depending upon friends to give me support	0	1	2	3	30 Believing that things will always work out
0	1	2	3	12 Trying to maintain family stability	0	1	2	3	31 Dating
0	1	2	3	13 Investing myself in my children	0	1	2	3	32 Talking to someone about how I feel
0	1	2	3	14 Becoming more independent	0	1	2	3	33 Showing that I'm strong
0	1	2	3	15 Reading	0	1	2	3	34 Using drugs
0	1	2	3	16 Believing that the organizations that my spouse and I work for have my family's best interest in mind	0	1	2	3	35 Making sure I take advantage of all the state and local economic benefits I have coming to me
0	1	2	3	17 Taking advantage of local programs and services aimed at helping those in my situation	0	1	2	3	36 Participating on a regular basis in planned activities conducted by others in my situation
0	1	2	3	18 Wishing my spouse (or former spouse) was not gone and that things were different	0	1	2	3	37 Establishing a routine which is not dependent upon my spouse (or former spouse) being around
0	1	2	3	19 Believing that my life would not be any better if my spouse were here (or my former spouse and I were still together)	0	1	2	3	38 Believing that I am better at running the family and/or finances without my spouse or former spouse

<div> <div>Not Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Very Helpful</div> </div>				COPING BEHAVIORS	<div> <div>Not Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Moderately Helpful</div> <div>Very Helpful</div> </div>				COPING BEHAVIORS
0	1	2	3	39 Believing that this is our style of life and I should enjoy it	0	1	2	3	55 Sleeping
0	1	2	3	40 Always trusting my faith to pull me through	0	1	2	3	56 Keeping myself in shape and well-groomed
0	1	2	3	41 Doing more things with the children	0	1	2	3	57 Watching television
0	1	2	3	42 Being a "good" wife and doing what my husband wants me to do	0	1	2	3	58 Going to movies
0	1	2	3	43 Believing in God	0	1	2	3	59 Remodeling or redecorating the house
0	1	2	3	44 Doing volunteer work	0	1	2	3	60 Engaging in club work (church, PTA, etc.)
0	1	2	3	45 Involvement in social activities (parties, etc.) with friends	0	1	2	3	61 Telling myself that I have many things I should be thankful for
0	1	2	3	46 Planning my future	0	1	2	3	62 Keeping problems to myself
0	1	2	3	47 Concentrating on hobbies (art, music, sewing, etc.)	0	1	2	3	63 Going shopping with friends
0	1	2	3	48 Eating	0	1	2	3	64 Advancing my professional career
0	1	2	3	49 Traveling	0	1	2	3	65 Living up to what society wants me to do as a parent
0	1	2	3	50 Always relying on myself to solve problems	0	1	2	3	66 Participating in gatherings and events with relatives
0	1	2	3	51 Going shopping with the children or by myself	0	1	2	3	67 Socializing with friends of the opposite sex
0	1	2	3	52 Reading about how other persons in my situation handle things	0	1	2	3	68 Establish a new style of life--new friends, new activities, etc.
0	1	2	3	53 Seeking encouragement, guidance and support from my parent(s)	0	1	2	3	69 Always believing that nothing bad could ever happen to my children
0	1	2	3	54 Engaging in relationships and friendships which are satisfying to me	0	1	2	3	70 Seeking out friends who understand how difficult it is for me at times

PLEASE Check all 70 items to be sure you have circled a number for each one.

Figure 2.  
Item Contents for the Family Coping Inventory Scales:  
Long-term Separation\* (1)

- I. **Maintaining Family Integrity**
  - 6 Doing things with the family
  - 8 Trying to be a father and a mother to the children
  - 12 Trying to maintain family stability
  - 13 Investing myself in my children
  - 41 Doing more things with the children
- II. **Developing Interpersonal Relationships and Social Support**
  - 45 Involvement in social activities (parties, etc.) with friends
  - 20 Building close relationships with people
  - 54 Engaging in relationships and friendships which are satisfying to me
  - 70 Seeking out friends who understand how difficult it is for me at times
  - 32 Talking to someone about how I feel
- III. **Managing Psychological Tension and Strain**
  - 18 Wishing my spouse (or former spouse) was not gone and that things were different
  - 57 Watching television
  - 35 Making sure I take advantage of all the state and local economic benefits I have coming to me
  - 63 Going shopping with friends
  - 28 Reliving the past; reflecting on the memorable moments
  - 29 Crying
- IV. **Believing in Surrounding Institutions and Maintaining an Optimistic Definition of the Situation**
  - 30 Believing that things will always work out
  - 43 Believing in God
  - 46 Planning my future
  - 56 Keeping myself in shape and well-groomed
  - 16 Believing that the institutions that my spouse and I work for have my family's best interest in mind
  - 61 Telling myself that I have many things I should be thankful for
- V. **Development Self-Reliance and Self-Esteem**
  - 3 Learning new skills
  - 4 Developing myself as a person
  - 14 Becoming more independent
  - 33 Showing that I am strong

\*Eigenvalues > 1.

(1) McCubbin et al., Family Assessment Inventories for Research and Practice, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1987.

# DYSPHORIA (PHASE 3)

38. Please answer the following question for all of the feelings listed below. Place an "x" in the space which best indicates how often you feel that way.

When you think of your daily life how often do you feel . . .?

	1 Not at all	2 Seldom	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Very Often
A. Bothered	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
B. Worried	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
C. Contented	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
D. Frustrated	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
E. Satisfied	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
F. Unhappy	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
G. Tense	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
H. Lonely	( )	( )	( )	( )	( )

CES-D SCALE (PHASE 3)

48. Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or acted. Please indicate how often you have felt this way during the past week by placing the appropriate number in the space to the right of the item.

1	2	3	4
Rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)	Some or little of the time (1 - 2 days)	Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3 - 4 days)	Most or all of the time (5 - 7 days)

DURING THE PAST WEEK:

- \_\_\_ A. I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.
- \_\_\_ B. I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.
- \_\_\_ C. I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends.
- \_\_\_ D. I felt that I was just as good as other people.
- \_\_\_ E. I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.
- \_\_\_ F. I felt depressed.
- \_\_\_ G. I felt that everything I did was an effort.
- \_\_\_ H. I felt hopeful about the future.
- \_\_\_ I. I thought my life had been a failure.
- \_\_\_ J. I felt fearful.
- \_\_\_ K. My sleep was restless.
- \_\_\_ L. I was happy.
- \_\_\_ M. I talked less than usual.
- \_\_\_ N. I felt lonely.
- \_\_\_ O. People were unfriendly.
- \_\_\_ P. I enjoyed life.
- \_\_\_ Q. I had crying spells.
- \_\_\_ R. I felt sad.
- \_\_\_ S. I felt that people dislike me.
- \_\_\_ T. I could not get going.
- \_\_\_ U. I helped a friend.

MARITAL HAPPINESS (PHASE 3)

49. How do you feel about your partner TODAY with respect to these areas of your marriage? Please write the appropriate number which best describes how you feel today, in the space to the left of the item.

Completely Unhappy				Neutral			Completely Happy		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

- |       |     |   |
|-------|-----|---|
| _____ | 1.  | Consideration   |
| _____ | 2.  | Affection   |
| _____ | 3.  | Household responsibilities                              |
| _____ | 4.  | Rearing of children                                     |
| _____ | 5.  | Social activities (as a couple<br>or with other people) |
| _____ | 6.  | Money   |
| _____ | 7.  | Communication   |
| _____ | 8.  | Sex   |
| _____ | 9.  | Academic or Occupational Progress                       |
| _____ | 10. | Your own independence                                   |
| _____ | 11. | Your partner's independence                             |

How happy do you feel in general TODAY about:

- |       |     |                |
|-------|-----|----------------|
| _____ | 12. | Your marriage? |
| _____ | 13. | Yourself?      |

# HEALTH SYMPTOMS (PHASE 3)

36. Please circle the number in the columns corresponding to the key below which best describes how often you have experienced the following symptoms or health problems in the past two weeks:

Never Rarely Sometimes Frequently				
1	2	3	4	A. swollen, stiff or painful joints
1	2	3	4	B. upset stomach or gastrointestinal disturbance
1	2	3	4	C. high blood pressure
1	2	3	4	D. headaches
1	2	3	4	E. eye strain
1	2	3	4	F. flu and colds
1	2	3	4	G. shortness of breath
1	2	3	4	H. hoarseness
1	2	3	4	I. chest pains
1	2	3	4	J. painful urination
1	2	3	4	K. back problems
1	2	3	4	L. ear infections
1	2	3	4	M. acne
1	2	3	4	N. bleeding gums
1	2	3	4	O. accidental injuries
1	2	3	4	P. asthma
1	2	3	4	Q. cramps
1	2	3	4	R. diabetes
1	2	3	4	S. trouble sleeping

GLOBAL HEALTH (PHASE 3)

37. How do you rate your health at the present time?

- 1. poor
- 2. fair
- 3. good
- 4. excellent

OVERALL SATISFACTION MEASURE (PHASE 3)

BOTH HUSBANDS and WIVES, please answer the following questions.

30. In general, how satisfied are you with all aspects of Navy life (including work, services, etc.)?

- 1. Fairly dissatisfied
- 2. Not sure
- 3. Fairly satisfied
- 4. Very satisfied
- 5. Very dissatisfied